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DEPARTMENT OF STATE TELEGRAM

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ACTION ARA-20

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 NSC-10 P-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-20 USIA-12 E-15 INT-06
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R 032202Z MAY 71
 FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2194
 INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
 USCINCSO

~~UNCLAS~~ CARACAS 2317

SUBJECT: CALDERA REAFFIRMS SOVEREIGNTY OVER LOS MONJES

RE: CARACAS 2217

1. IN SPECIAL VISIT MAY 2, PRESIDENT CALDERA REAFFIRMED VENEZUELAN SOVEREIGNTY OVER LOS MONJES ISLANDS. CALDERA POINTEDLY ACCOMPANIED BY DEFMIN GARCIA, MINMINES AND HYDROCARBONS PEREZ LA SALVIA, ACTING FONMIN ZAMBRANO, GOV CHIEF NEGOTIATOR WITH COLOMBIA, CARLOS SOSA RODRIGUEZ AND HOST OF OTHER TOP GOV OFFICIALS AND REPRESENTATIVES OTHER ASPECTS VENEZUELAN SOCIETY SUCH AS PRO-VENEZUELA'S CERVINI AND CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS. CALDERA'S PARTY ARRIVED AT ISLANDS' NEW "PORT" BY NAVY SHIP AND DEPARTED BY HELICOPTER FROM RECENTLY-CONSTRUCTED PAD.
2. PEREZ LA SALVIA TOLD REPORTERS THERE WAS NO OIL ON ISLANDS BUT STATED "NEXT STEPS OF CVP ARE EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION OF GULF OF VENEZUELA AND TAR BELT OF ORINOCO." ACCORDING DEFMIN, ISLANDS' NEW METEOROLOGICAL STATION WILL BE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR AIR AND SEA NAVIGATION. MINAGRICULTURE ALLEGEDLY DOING STUDIES OF FISHING POTENTIAL IN SURROUNDING WATERS. EL NACION CORRESPONDENT NOTED THAT LOS MONJES THEMSELVES OFFER NO ATTRACTION BUT PLAY IMPORTANT ROLE IN DELIMITING OF CONTINENTAL SHELF WITH COLOMBIA.

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3. ACCORDING TO PRESS, COLOMBIAN TERRITORIAL WATERS NEARBY
ARE PATROLLED BY COLOMBIAN SHIPS, ONE OF WHICH SPECIALIZES IN
CAPTURING TRESPASSING VENEZUELAN FISHING VESSELS. HOWEVER, IN
VENEZUELAN AREA, GOV MINTAINS SUBMARINE, AND VARIOUS PATROL
CRAFT.

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